

A Missed Opportunity

In the early morning hours of September 1st, after months of debate and in the face of a deficit in excess of \$8 billion, the General Assembly passed a state budget for the next two fiscal years that fails to address our fiscal crisis.

Instead, this 730-page budget is filled with increases to dozens of different taxes and fees and, amazingly, hundreds of millions of dollars in new spending. It drains the Rainy Day Fund, leans on one-time payouts from the federal stimulus program and borrows more than \$1 billion to make up the difference. Yet our financial problems are far from over. According to the state's non-partisan Office of Fiscal Analysis, Connecticut is staring at a combined deficit of more than \$9 billion for 2012, 2013 and 2014.

For many months I joined my legislative Republican colleagues in calling for a balanced budget that cuts spending, consolidates government agencies and commissions and streamlines state government. We also spent time traveling the state, meeting with small business owners and employees. Many of these businesses have already been laying off employees and cutting back on things like health benefits, overtime and 401(k) contributions just to make ends meet. In the real world, folks have been making cuts and sacrifices, but our state government simply refused to do the same.

The legislature missed a tremendous opportunity to break our bad habit of government overspending and overreaching. However, I will continue to fight to bring Connecticut a more efficient, business-friendly, accountable state government.



Senator McLachlan meets with Danbury public officials at his budget forum in April.



Senator McLachlan talks with small business owners at a roundtable in Danbury over the summer.

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STATE SENATOR

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★ ★ ★ 24TH DISTRICT ★ ★ ★

2009 LEGISLATIVE REPORT



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Dear Friend,

It is an honor to serve the people of Danbury, Bethel, New Fairfield and Sherman in the state Senate. I have written this pamphlet to keep you informed on activities here in Hartford. I hope you take a few moments to read about some of the important issues I am working on.

As always, I encourage you to contact me with any questions, concerns or feedback. Please feel free to call my office at 800.842.1421, email me at Michael.McLachlan@cga.ct.gov, or you can write to me at:

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Visit my website www.SenatorMcLachlan.cga.ct.gov for updates. There you can read news archives, watch video of Senate floor debates and press conferences, participate in an interactive blog and sign up to receive email updates. You can also follow me on my Facebook page, on Twitter and at my blog, SenatorMcLachlan.blogspot.com.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve as your senator in Hartford.

Sincerely,

Michael A. McLachlan
State Senator – 24th District



STAY INFORMED:

Visit my website
SenatorMcLachlan.cga.ct.gov
for news, video, updates, events and more.

2009 LEGISLATIVE ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Protecting America’s Veterans

At the start of this year’s session, I proposed legislation to help veterans in need of housing. In **SB 240: An Act Concerning Housing for Veterans**, I hoped to give veterans a preference in any state program providing affordable or subsidized housing. Although this bill did not progress this year, I fully intend to try again when the General Assembly reconvenes in February.

I am happy to report that the General Assembly passed a number of laws this year that protect and provide for our veterans and the brave men and women serving in the armed forces.

Property Tax Exemptions (PA 09-176)

Prior to 2009, a veteran claiming the disabled veterans’ property tax exemption was required to submit proof of his or her disability each year. Now, disabled veterans only need to submit proof of their disability to the town once, unless the U.S. Veterans’ Administration (VA) changes their status.

Expanding Eligibility for Benefits (PA 09-117)

This law makes more veterans eligible for important benefits like property tax exemptions and tuition waivers by clarifying that “service in time of war” means service of 90 or more cumulative days.

Military Honors (PA 09-90)

PA 09-90 provides our veterans with the honors they deserve by requiring the veterans’ affairs commissioner to award medals and ribbons to wartime veterans who lived in Connecticut when they were called to duty or lived in Connecticut when the award was handed out. It also allows for the posthumous award of medals or ribbons to veterans who died on or after January 1, 2000.

Military Family Relief Fund (PA 09-163)

We have expanded the Military Family Relief Fund to provide benefits to immediate relatives of members of the armed services living in Connecticut whether or not they are on active duty.

If you are a veteran and need assistance, or would like more information on these new laws, please call my office at 800.842.1421.



Senator McLachlan presents Danbury WWII veteran Vito Simaleavich with U.S. Navy Service Medals.

Cystic Fibrosis Screening for Newborns

Cystic fibrosis is a genetic, inherited disease affecting more than 70,000 people worldwide. The disease primarily affects the respiratory and digestive systems and the symptoms can be devastating. They include frequent lung infections, wheezing and persistent coughing. It can also keep the body from breaking down and absorbing food.

It’s always difficult for parents to see their child ill or hurt. While there is no cure for cystic fibrosis, the sooner a child is diagnosed, the more likely it is that treatment will work.

That is why I was proud to co-sponsor **PA 09-20: An Act Requiring the Administration of a Screening Test for Cystic Fibrosis to Newborn Infants**. This new law, which Governor Rell signed in May, requires hospitals to conduct testing for cystic fibrosis on newborns. Parents can forgo the test if they choose.

If you’d like to learn more about the disease and treatment options visit www.cff.org



Sex Offender Notification

Providing a safe community for our children is a responsibility we all share, and I am committed to doing all I can to maintain that safety and security. That is why I was proud to co-sponsor **Public Act 09-199**, a law that now requires the state to notify school superintendents when a registered sex offender is released into the community.

Funding for the 24th District

The 24th District received state bonding and grant money this year for important projects and improvements. Some of those projects are listed below.

- **Bethel** - \$200,000 for road re-paving
- **New Fairfield** - \$250,000 for the construction of 3 new radio towers
- **Sherman** - \$200,000 for the renovation of historic property

